

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending.

The amendments incorporate into claim 1 contacting the catalyst with a gaseous stream comprising ozone. Support for the amendment is at page 16, lines 15-16 and page 32, lines 19-20 of the specification

Claims 1, 2, and 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 3-224633 (Ishida) on the ground that it would have been obvious to modify the process in Ishida by using a gaseous stream and thereby arrive at Applicant's invention. This rejection should be withdrawn because it would not have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art to use a gaseous stream in the process of Ishida. As currently amended, claim 1 recites a process for regenerating a hydrocarbon conversion catalyst comprising zeolite L, the process comprising contacting the catalyst with a gaseous stream comprising ozone at regeneration conditions and absent a halogen-containing compound oxidizable by ozone at the regeneration conditions, the contacting occurring at a temperature of from about 20 to about 250°C. After careful review of the English abstract of Ishida provided by the examiner, Applicant understands that Ishida discloses regenerating a zeolite catalyst having reduced catalytic activity after its use in the hydration reaction of olefin in a liquid phase. To regenerate the catalyst, Ishida successively contacts the catalyst with an oxidizing agent such as hydrogen peroxide or ozone in a liquid phase, an aqueous solution of an inorganic alkali salt and an inorganic acid. Both Ishida's conditions causing catalyst deactivation and Ishida's conditions for regeneration are liquid phase. There is nothing to motivate a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Ishida by changing the phase of the fluid contacting the catalyst. Ishida contains no hint or suggestion to remove liquid from the deactivated catalyst and perform any or all of the regeneration in the vapor phase. For instance, Ishida contains no hint or suggestion to re-introduce liquid to the catalyst either during or after regeneration in the gas phase. Therefore, Ishida does not render claim 1 obvious. Therefore, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishida should be withdrawn. The rejection of claims 2 and 4-6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishida should be withdrawn for the reasons given in support of claim 1 because they are dependent on claim 1. The rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishida should be withdrawn for the reasons given in support of claim 1 because claim 7 recites contacting the catalyst with a gaseous stream comprising ozone.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the subject application is now believed to be in a condition for an allowance of all claims and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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